

2015

MICHIGAN FALL TURKEY DIGEST

Application Period: July 1 - Aug. 1, 2015

REMINDERS

- A base license is required for every resident and nonresident who hunts in Michigan. Hunters may purchase their fall turkey license only after they have obtained a base license for the year.

Drawing results posted Aug. 10

Visit www.michigan.gov/huntdrawings



RAP (Report All Poaching): 800-292-7800

www.michigan.gov/turkey

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the State's natural and cultural resources for current and future generations.

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The Michigan Natural Resources Commission (NRC) is a seven-member public body whose members are appointed by the governor and subject to the advice and consent of the Senate. The NRC has exclusive authority to regulate the taking of game and sportfish.

The commission conducts monthly, public meetings in locations throughout Michigan. Citizens are encouraged to become actively involved in these public forums. For more information visit michigan.gov/nrc.

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NOTICE: This brochure is not a legal notice or a complete collection of hunting regulations and laws. It is a condensed digest issued for hunter's convenience. Copies of Wildlife Conservation Orders, which contain complete listings of regulations and legal descriptions, are available on our website: www.michigan.gov/dnr/laws

MICHIGAN FALL TURKEY DIGEST

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This publication is available in alternative formats upon request.



Stay on top of the latest news from the Michigan DNR!
Visit us at michigan.gov/dnr and click on the red envelope to sign up for e-mail updates!

Mentoring: See the Difference It Makes

The fall wild turkey season offers the perfect setting for experienced turkey hunters to share their knowledge and skills with other hunters or introduce the sport to new hunters. Turkey hunting is a challenging, interactive activity that is best shared with others. Learning the habits and behaviors of wild turkeys, scouting, practicing calling, etc., can be more rewarding when two or more people work together as a team. Hunters who fill their tag can get that same enjoyment and satisfaction by helping a youngster or apprentice hunter with his or her first turkey hunting experience. Be a mentor.... make a difference!

Wild Turkeys Make History

For the first time in history, wild turkeys can be found in parts of every county in Michigan's Lower Peninsula plus areas of the Upper Peninsula. The expansion of wild turkeys in Michigan did not happen overnight, but has unfolded over the last half-century. As the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) moves from restoration management to adaptive management, there is a need to establish realistic expectations for the next decade.

Wild turkeys were a common element in Michigan prior to the arrival of European settlers. In fact, wild turkeys have been in North America for a long time. Turkey bones dating back 50,000 years have been found in caves in the eastern United States. During the pre-Columbian times of Michigan's history, it is estimated that more than 94,000 wild turkeys roamed the state. The wild turkey is native solely to the New World, indigenous to the wilds of this continent, and is the ancestor of all domestic turkeys worldwide.

The comeback of the wild turkey is one of the greatest wildlife conservation stories in America's history. Today, there are more than 7 million wild turkeys in the United States; however, there was a time when the sighting of a wild turkey in this country was rare.

Recovery Begins

With the wild turkey gone from every county in Michigan, conservationists set out to re-establish the bird, but their efforts met with limited success. In 1905, Cleveland Cliffs Mining Company released turkeys on Grand Island, off Munising in Lake Superior, but the birds didn't survive. The earliest documented attempt by the DNR to reestablish turkeys in Michigan was in 1919 and again in 1920. In those two years, 65 hand-reared wild turkeys were released at the Sanford Game Refuge. Birds and "turkey sign" were seen in the vicinity until 1925, but the refuge manager reported that the birds were "popped-off" by violators. More unsuccessful releases were made through the late 1930s in southern Michigan. In 1937, a national coalition of conservationists, virtually all of them hunters, backed by the sporting arms and ammunition industries, persuaded Congress to direct the receipts from an excise tax on those items into a special fund to

be distributed to the State for wildlife restoration. Had it not been for this key legislation, the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act (also known as the Pittman-Robertson Act of 1937), wild turkeys and a variety of other wildlife would have been reduced to nothing more than part of local lore and national legend. With this type of nationwide support, there was increased interest in wild turkey restoration.

In the spring of 1954, the Department of Natural Resources purchased 50 turkeys and 400 eggs from the Pennsylvania Allegheny Wild Turkey Farm. The 50 birds were released at six sites in the Allegan State Game Area, and the eggs were incubated at the Mason State Game Farm. Not all birds and eggs survived, so additional restoration attempts continued. By 1964, approximately 2,000 free-ranging birds had become established in Michigan's Lower Peninsula.

During the late 1950's, the rocket net was adapted for use on turkeys from similar nets used in Europe to capture waterfowl. This new wildlife capture technique revolutionized the ability of resource managers to live trap wild turkeys for restoration efforts. Since the use of rocket nets in Michigan began, wild turkey live-trapping and translocation has been part of Michigan's management program. In 1983, the DNR, working together with many partners, acquired wild turkeys from Iowa and Missouri for translocation to southern Michigan. Since 1983, numerous releases of wild trapped birds from other states and newly restored southern Michigan sites have occurred, and the population has expanded to historic levels.



Hunting Returns

Turkey hunting returned to Michigan in 1965 with a fall season occurring in the Allegan area. Since 1968, spring seasons have been the primary hunt times. In 1977, there were 5,000 square miles open for spring hunting in the Mio, Baldwin, and Allegan hunting units. By 1991, wild turkeys encompassed about 22,000 square miles of spring hunting area in the Upper Peninsula and northern Lower Peninsula. Truly, the wild turkey population range had expanded dramatically. Today, turkeys inhabit most counties, and there are more areas open to spring hunting than at any time in the history of Michigan. In 1977, a hunter's chances of drawing a license to hunt were about 25 percent. Today, all individuals are guaranteed an opportunity to buy a spring turkey hunting license. In 1977, hunter success was below 10 percent. Today, hunters experience about 30 percent success regardless of whether they hunt the first hunt period or the last period. In 1977, hunters harvested 400 turkeys. Today, over 30,000 turkeys are taken by successful hunters. Michigan is ranked seventh in the nation for turkey harvest trailing Missouri, Alabama, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, New York, and Mississippi.

Finding a Good Place to Live

Eastern wild turkeys are usually described as permanent residents of mature woodlands; yet, they have adapted to a variety of forest types and cover throughout their range in the Midwest. Trees, shrubs, and grass in close proximity to each other are the key ingredients of good turkey habitat. Trees supply fruits, nuts, catkins, and buds for food, and nighttime roosting sites where turkeys can escape from ground-dwelling predators. Mast-producing trees such as oaks and beeches are especially important food producers. Fruit-producing shrubs also provide important fall and winter food. Grassy openings supply an abundance of insects, seeds, and other foods for adults and especially for poults. Turkeys' annual home range is roughly two square miles. For help in managing your land for turkeys, visit www.michigan.gov/landownersguide.

Managing These Amazing Birds

Managing wild turkeys in Michigan involves the complex interactions of turkey populations, their habitat and their relationship to people. Hunting plays an important role in managing turkeys by regulating their numbers. The goal of the spring wild turkey hunting season is to maximize hunter opportunity while maintaining a satisfactory hunting experience. Limited to bearded turkeys only, this conservative harvest approach has allowed the continued growth and expansion of the wild turkey population in Michigan. Wild turkey hunting in the fall enables the DNR to stabilize or reduce wild turkey numbers in certain areas of the state to meet local goals based on habitat conditions and public attitudes. License quotas are developed to harvest the desired number of turkeys to meet the management goal. To help reach these goals, hunters are encouraged to harvest female turkeys during the fall season.

How YOU Can Help

What does the future hold for wild turkeys? To protect the wild turkey resource that Michigan citizens consider such a valuable renewable asset, it is critical to not become complacent with past successes. Conservation organizations, interested individuals, and resource managers need to continue to work together to inform the public about the intricacies of natural processes. Other ways to help:

- Educate the public about natural phenomena such as plant succession, population dynamics, and predator-prey relationships.
- Understand the potential impact of avian diseases like histomoniasis, avian pox, and mycoplasma on wild turkey populations in association with wildlife feeding. Develop and promote ethics and good sportsmanship in wild turkey hunting.
- Stop the illegal killing of turkeys. Report all poaching at 800-292-7800.
- Support hunter education. Enroll a new hunter in a hunter education program today. Be a mentor!
- Become involved with land use and urbanization issues that have a negative impact on wild turkeys.
- Protect and manage suitable wild turkey habitat to ensure continued success.

Report January Sightings of Wild Turkey

Hunters can assist the DNR by reporting any sightings of wild turkeys during January. This information, which is kept confidential, is used to manage the turkey resource. You can make your report online at www.michigan.gov/turkey or you can contact a DNR office listed on the back of this digest.

Report Sightings of Diseased Wildlife

In an effort to maintain healthy wildlife populations, the DNR encourages people to report any sightings of sick or diseased wildlife, including wild turkeys. Information about the location, number of animals, and animal condition should be provided to the Wildlife Health Disease Laboratory. You can report your information online at www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases, then scroll down to the “Seasonal Information” section and click on the “Report Diseased Wildlife” link. Or, you can call the Wildlife Health Disease Laboratory at 517-336-5030.



Planting crabapples is a great way to create turkey habitat.



The Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act of 1937 created a funding mechanism for state wildlife agencies to restore and manage their wildlife resources. A federal excise tax on firearms and ammunition, bows and arrows is collected by the Internal Revenue Service and apportioned to states through a formula based on the number of licensed hunters and the size of each state.

Eligible states are those that have passed laws preventing the use of hunting license fees for any purpose other than managing the state's wildlife. The federal excise tax, along with hunter license fees, are used to acquire lands; protect, restore and manage wildlife habitats; manage wildlife populations; conduct wildlife research and surveys; provide hunter access; and develop, operate and maintain facilities and infrastructure necessary to manage wildlife resources. Additionally, a specific portion of the federal excise tax is dedicated for hunter education, and for developing and managing shooting ranges. Since its inception in 1937, Michigan's share of the Wildlife Restoration Funds has reached over \$275 million.

2015 Hunting Information

From July 1 - Aug. 1, hunters may apply for one limited-quota license, for a specific fall turkey hunt unit and season dates. Application fee is \$5. Applicants selected in the drawing may then purchase a limited-quota license (see License Cost table on pg. 12) online at www.michigan.gov/huntdrawings or at a license agent. After the drawing, any leftover licenses will be sold until quotas are met. Depending on how many hunters apply, leftover licenses may or may not be available for some hunt units and/or dates.

Hunters who do not apply for the drawing may purchase a leftover license, if available, beginning Aug. 24 (see pg. 12). **Hunters may purchase one license a day until quotas are met.** The \$5 application fee will not be charged (only applies to drawing participants).

How to Apply for a Limited-License Hunt

1. Look at the map on pg. 10 and choose a hunt unit.
2. Look at the tables on pg. 11 to find the corresponding hunt number for the hunt unit you chose.
3. Purchase an application for the hunt number you chose at a license agent, DNR Customer Service Center, or online at www.mdnr-elicence.com. (It is unlawful to apply more than once).
4. Check your receipt for accuracy, and retain as proof of application.

PURE MICHIGAN HUNT

APPLY TODAY

For this multi-species hunt and a prize package valued at over \$4,000!
Each application only \$5. Visit www.michigan.gov/puremichiganhunt

Application Information

- You may apply for the license drawing at a license agent, DNR Customer Service Center, or online at www.mdnr-elicense.com. It costs \$5 to apply.
- You will need one of the following forms of customer identification:
 - Valid Michigan driver’s license
 - State of Michigan ID card (issued by the Secretary of State)
 - DNR Sportcard (issued through license agents or at www.mdnr-elicense.com)
- A base license is required for every resident and nonresident who hunts in Michigan. Hunters may purchase their fall turkey license only after they have obtained a base license for the year. An application may be purchased prior to obtaining a base license. For base license costs, see pg. 12.
- You must be at least 10 years of age by the time a fall turkey license is purchased, unless purchasing a mentored youth hunting license.
- You may **apply only once**.
- You may apply in a partnership with **one** other person. The first applicant of each partnership chooses a hunt unit(s) and receives a “party ID” number, which is printed on his or her receipt. A new party ID number is issued each year. The other partner will need this party ID number when applying to complete the partnership. **Make sure the party ID numbers are identical. Applicants who apply with more than one partner will be ineligible for the drawing.**

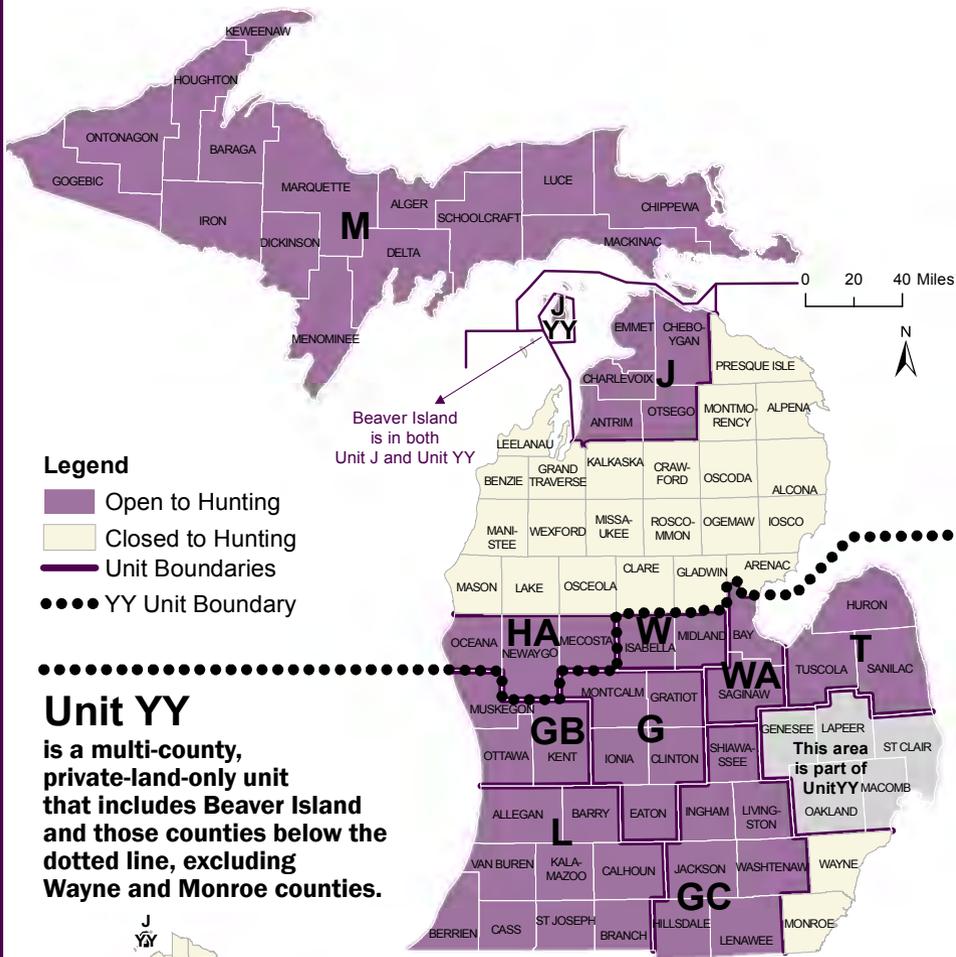
IMPORTANT:

You are responsible for obtaining a DNR application receipt that states your customer ID and hunt choice. Check this receipt for accuracy and retain as proof that you applied. **Ensure any application errors are corrected prior to the application deadline.** Do not accept a receipt that is not legible.

- Applicants who submit an invalid application will be ineligible for the drawing.
- You are responsible for obtaining your drawing results online.
- For application assistance, call 517-284-WILD (9453).

Drawings results will be posted at www.michigan.gov/huntdrawings on Aug. 10.

2015 Fall Turkey Hunt Units



For detailed descriptions of hunt unit boundaries, go online to www.michigan.gov/dnr/laws or contact a DNR Customer Service Center.

Limited-License Hunt Units

General Licenses

The general licenses listed below are valid on all public and private land within the unit.

HUNT UNIT	SEASON DATES	MAXIMUM LICENSE	
		QUOTA	HUNT NUMBER
G	Sept. 15 - Nov. 14	200	0401
GB	Sept. 15 - Nov. 14	250	0402
GC	Sept. 15 - Nov. 14	200	0403
J	Sept. 15 - Nov. 14	1,500	0404
L	Sept. 15 - Nov. 14	1,000	0405
M	Sept. 15 - Nov. 14	1,500	0406
T	Sept. 15 - Nov. 14	200	0407
W	Sept. 15 - Nov. 14	200	0408
WA	Sept. 15 - Nov. 14	100	0409

Private-Land-Only Licenses

The private-land licenses listed below are not valid on county, state, or federal lands, except hunt unit YY may be used to hunt Fort Custer military lands with permission. You are encouraged to have permission to hunt private lands before applying for one of these licenses.

HUNT UNIT	SEASON DATES	MAXIMUM LICENSE	
		QUOTA	HUNT NUMBER
HA	Sept. 15 - Nov. 14	1,700	0410
YY	Sept. 15 - Nov. 14	45,000	0501

Fall hunt unit YY encompasses only private lands in southern Michigan and on Beaver Island.

Leftover Licenses

There is no guarantee that leftover licenses will be available for any hunt unit. If any licenses remain after the drawing, unsuccessful applicants who possess a current base license may purchase a leftover turkey license online or from any license agent on a first-come, first-served basis for a one-week period beginning Aug. 17 at 10 a.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST). Any limited-quota licenses that remain as of Aug. 24 at 10 a.m. EST may be purchased by any hunter, with a current base license, including those who did not apply for a fall turkey license.

Hunters may purchase one license a day until quotas are met.

Leftover fall turkey licenses are available to residents who are active-duty military and qualifying disabled veterans free of charge.

License Purchase

If you are selected in the drawing or wish to purchase a leftover license, you may purchase your hunting license online at www.mdnr-elicense.com or from any license agent.

- Hunters may purchase one license a day until quotas are met.
- Make sure the information on your license(s) is accurate.
- Licenses may not be altered or transferred.

When hunting, you must carry your fall turkey license and the identification used to purchase that license and present both upon demand of a Michigan conservation officer, a tribal conservation officer or any law enforcement officer.

A base license is required for every resident and non-resident who hunts in Michigan. Hunters may purchase their fall turkey license only after they have obtained a base license for the year. An application may be purchased prior to obtaining a base license.

Licenses by Age	Cost				
	Up to Age 9	Junior Age: 10-16	Resident Age: 17+	Resident Senior Age: 65+	Nonresident* Age: 17+
Mentored Youth License	\$7.50	--	--	--	--
Application for License Drawing	--	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$5.00
Base License	--	\$6.00	\$11.00	\$5.00	\$151.00
Turkey Fall License	--	\$15.00	\$15.00	\$6.00	\$15.00

*Nonresidents under 17 years of age may purchase a resident base license.

Active-Duty Military Personnel and Veterans with Disabilities

Leftover licenses are available to active-duty military, who have maintained resident status, and qualifying disabled veterans, beginning Aug. 24, free of charge. Licenses that were applied for by active-duty military and disabled veterans come at regular resident price.

If you have any license questions, please call 517-284-6057.

Apprentice Hunting License

A person who does not have a hunter safety certificate and is 10 years of age or older may purchase a base apprentice hunting license. An apprentice hunter may purchase this license for two license years before he or she must successfully complete a hunter safety course. The base apprentice hunting license is available to residents and nonresidents.

When afield, an apprentice hunter must be accompanied by someone 21 years of age or older who possesses a regular current-year hunting license for the same game as the apprentice. For apprentices 10-16 years of age, the accompanying hunter must be the apprentice's parent, guardian, or someone designated by the parent or guardian. "Accompanied by" requires the accompanying hunter to be able to come to the immediate aid of the apprentice and stay within a distance that permits uninterrupted, unaided visual and verbal contact.

For hunting wild turkey, the accompanying hunter needs a 2015 turkey hunting license, but it does not have to be for the same hunt unit and season date as the apprentice. A person may accompany no more than two apprentice hunters.

Mentored Youth Hunting Program

Youth hunters 9 years of age and younger may hunt deer, turkey, and small game, trap furbearers, and fish for all species with a licensed mentor. The mentor must be at least 21 years of age and hunter safety-certified. The mentored youth license is a "package" license that includes a base license and entitles the youth to hunt, trap and fish for the species listed above during all open seasons for the species. Additional restrictions apply; complete program details can be found in the Michigan Hunting and Trapping Digest, or online at www.michigan.gov/mentoredhunting.

A fall turkey kill tag issued under the mentored youth hunting license is valid for one turkey during any turkey hunt period, in any open turkey hunt unit, on private or public land. No application is required for the mentored youth license.

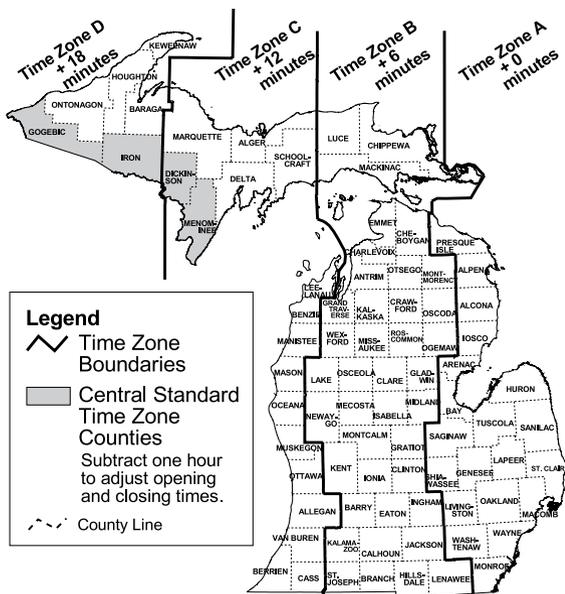
Zone A Hunting Hours Table

One-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset (adjusted for daylight-saving time)

2015	Sept.		Oct.		Nov.	
Date	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.
1			6:59	7:44	6:35	5:56
2			7:00	7:42	6:37	5:55
3			7:01	7:41	6:38	5:53
4			7:02	7:39	6:39	5:52
5			7:04	7:37	6:40	5:51
6			7:05	7:36	6:42	5:50
7			7:06	7:34	6:43	5:49
8			7:07	7:32	6:44	5:48
9			7:08	7:31	6:45	5:46
10			7:09	7:29	6:47	5:45
11			7:10	7:27	6:48	5:44
12			7:12	7:26	6:49	5:43
13			7:13	7:24	6:50	5:42
14			7:14	7:22	6:52	5:41
15	6:42	8:12	7:15	7:21		
16	6:43	8:11	7:16	7:19		
17	6:44	8:09	7:17	7:18		
18	6:45	8:07	7:18	7:16		
19	6:46	8:05	7:20	7:14		
20	6:47	8:04	7:21	7:13		
21	6:48	8:02	7:22	7:11		
22	6:49	8:00	7:23	7:10		
23	6:51	7:58	7:24	7:08		
24	6:52	7:56	7:26	7:07		
25	6:53	7:55	7:27	7:05		
26	6:54	7:53	7:28	7:04		
27	6:55	7:51	7:29	7:03		
28	6:56	7:49	7:30	7:01		
29	6:57	7:48	7:32	7:00		
30	6:58	7:46	7:33	6:59		
31			7:34	6:57		

Hunting Hours

Actual legal hunting hours (one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset) for Zone A are printed in the table. To determine the opening (a.m.) or closing (p.m.) time in another zone, add the minutes shown on the map for the zone to the time from the Zone A Hunting Hours Table. The hunting hour listed in the table reflects EST adjusted for daylight-saving time where appropriate. If you are hunting in Gogebic, Iron, Dickinson or Menominee counties (Central Standard Time), you must make an additional adjustment to the printed time by subtracting one hour.



Bag Limit

One turkey (any sex) per fall turkey license. It is unlawful to tag a turkey you did not kill, use a tag of another, use a tag more than once, or allow another person to use your tag. Turkeys may not be taken while they are in a tree.

Hunting Methods

Turkey hunters may use a bow and arrow, a crossbow, a firearm that fires a fixed shotgun shell, or a muzzleloading shotgun. For taking a turkey, crossbow hunters may only use arrows, bolts, and quarrels at least 14 inches in length, tipped with a broadhead point at least 7/8 inch wide. It is illegal to use or carry afield any other firearm. The prohibition on carrying any other type of firearm does not apply to pistols carried under authority of a concealed pistol license, or under a specific exception from the CPL requirement. When taking wild turkey, a person shall not use or carry afield any ammunition except shotgun shells loaded with no. 4 or smaller shot or no. 4 or smaller loose shot for use in muzzleloading shotguns. Non-toxic shot is recommended for the hunting of wild turkey. You may hunt turkeys from an elevated stand or tree using a bow and arrow or crossbow.

Turkeys may be hunted with dogs during the fall season. The use or possession of electronic devices that imitate wild turkey calls is illegal.

Hunters using portable ground blinds or tree stands on public land must remove them at the end of each day's hunt. **Exception:** hunters with disabilities in possession of qualifying permits.

Youth

On private land or Commercial Forest land, or public land:

- Youth of all ages: may hunt turkey using archery, crossbow, or firearm equipment as stated above.

Baiting Prohibited

It is unlawful to use bait to aid in the taking of a wild turkey. For the purpose of this regulation, "bait" means a substance composed of grain, fruit, vegetables or other food placed to lure or entice wild turkeys. This does not apply to standing farm crops (normal agricultural practices) or other naturally growing grains, fruits or vegetables.

Decoys

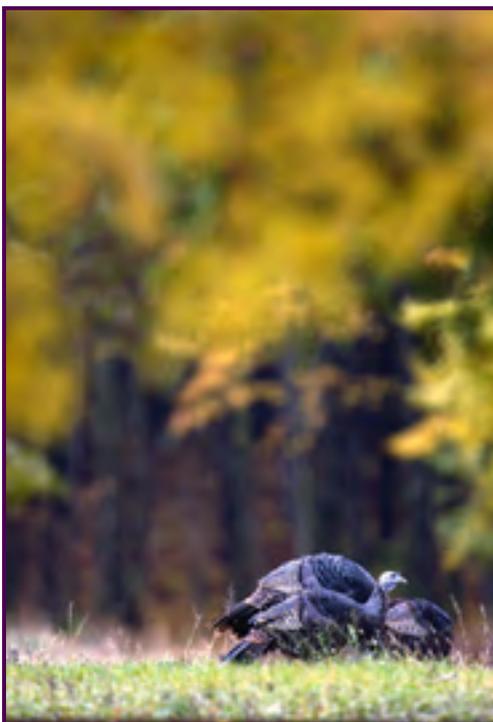
Mechanical, electronic, or live decoys are prohibited. Mechanical decoy means any device that by design or construction uses motion as a visual stimulus to attract a wild turkey. A wind sock or similar decoy body anchored at a fixed point into the ground and whose only motion is derived exclusively by power of the natural wind is legal.

Validating Kills

Immediately upon killing a turkey, a person shall validate his or her license by notching out the appropriate information as instructed on the license and securely attaching the license around a leg of the bird. A person shall not transport or have in his or her possession a turkey unless the validated license is attached to a leg of the bird.

Turkey Hunting Reporting Option

Turkey hunters, we need your help. After your hunting season has ended, please report your hunting activity on the Internet by visiting www.michigan.gov/turkey. Information you provide will improve management and ensure that decisions regarding hunting seasons are based on the best information available.



Wild Turkey Cooperator Patch

Michigan's wild turkey patch program is coordinated by the Michigan chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation, in partnership with the DNR. Young hunters, 17 years of age and younger, who have a valid wild turkey hunting license may receive a free patch. To receive a patch, please send name and complete address, along with a legible copy of the youth's valid wild turkey hunting license, to National Wild Turkey Federation, Wild Turkey Patch Program, P.O. Box 8, Orleans, MI 48865. Please allow four to six weeks for delivery. If you have questions, please e-mail michiganwildturkeypatch@yahoo.com.

Adult hunters, collectors, and other interested individuals may purchase the patch for \$5, including postage and handling. Only the current-year patch is available for purchase. You do not have to harvest a turkey to purchase a patch. Send orders to the address above, and please make your check or money order payable to the National Wild Turkey Federation. The NWTF is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of the American wild turkey and the preservation of the hunting tradition. Proceeds from patch sales are used to fund wild turkey-related projects and management in Michigan. Each year the NWTF, working cooperatively with the DNR, contributes more than \$300,000 to wild turkey and hunter-heritage programs in Michigan.



Dioxin Advisory Information

Health assessors from the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) and Michigan Department of Natural Resources determined that samples of wild game from the floodplains of the Tittabawassee River and Saginaw River downstream of Midland contained high levels of dioxin and dioxin-like compounds. Wild game tested include deer, turkey, cottontail rabbit, squirrel, wood duck and Canada goose. As a result, the MDCH advises that hunters and their families follow these recommendations related to turkey:

- Do not eat turkey harvested in or near the floodplain of the Tittabawassee River downstream of Midland. If you choose to eat turkey taken from this area anyway, at a minimum the skin, liver, and gizzard should be removed and discarded.
- Other wild game that have not been tested in this area may also contain dioxins at levels that are a concern. To reduce general dioxin exposure from other wild game, trim any visible fat from the meat before cooking. Do not consume organ meats such as the liver or brains, and do not eat the skin.

For additional information regarding dioxin, dioxin-like compounds and wild game advisories for the Tittabawassee River and Saginaw River floodplains, including a map of the area covered by these advisories, go to the MDCH website at www.michigan.gov/dioxin.

Commercial Hunting Guides on State Land

All commercial hunting guides utilizing state-owned lands must receive written authorization. Guides are required to meet the conditions of the written authorization. If you are a guide who utilizes state-owned lands, please visit www.michigan.gov/wildlifepermits or contact a DNR Customer Service Center for more information. Commercial guiding on National Forest (NF) lands requires a special use permit. Applications can be obtained through any office or by calling - Hiawatha NF: 906-428-5800; Huron-Manistee NF 231-775-5023; Ottawa NF: 906-932-1330.

Poachers Beware: Hunters are Watching

Violations of turkey hunting regulations, including application violations, are misdemeanors. Misdemeanors may be punishable by up to 90 days imprisonment, up to \$1,000 fines, and license revocation for up to three years. Reimbursement to the state for unlawful taking of wild turkey is \$1,000 per animal.

Recreational Trespass

This law requires permission from the landowner or lease-holder before you may hunt on any farmlands or connected woodlots or on any fenced or posted private lands, and prohibits discharge of a firearm within the right-of-way of public roads adjacent to these lands without permission of the landowner.

2015 Fall Turkey Workshops

The DNR, Michigan Wild Turkey Hunters Association (MWTHA), National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf), and other groups are offering wild turkey hunter orientation courses. A fee may be charged, and space may be limited. For details contact:

Workshop Information and Contacts

Aug. 16
2 p.m.

Bass Pro Shops, *Auburn Hills*
Beard & Spurs Chapter, NWTf
Bernard Tobianski, (586) 264-8053

Wild Turkey Hunting Tips, Ethics and Safety

A key component of successful fall turkey hunting is locating birds. Good areas for sighting flocks include idle fields, woodlands and around logging trails. Scout for tracks, fresh droppings and feathers.

Locate a good food source, around which birds are congregating – in the fall, for instance, turkeys feed on insects and mast crops like acorns – and learn the habits of the birds. Listen for the sounds of birds scratching in the leaves or for their “flock talk” as they come and go to roost. Roosting flocks may produce a wide variety of yelps, clucks, “kee-kees” and gobbles.

Once you have located a flock, one hunting tactic is to scatter the flock. Approach the flock within 50 yards and flush the birds so they will scatter. A dispersed flock normally will begin to regroup near the original point of separation within 15 to 30 minutes. Quickly set up at this spot and, as the flock begins to reassemble, begin calling the turkeys by imitating the same sounds they make. Answer every turkey call you hear with similar tone, pitch and rhythm. Using a decoy also may help fool birds into approaching your location.

Successful hunters sit still and allow the birds to come to them. Because a turkey can detect and react to movement 10 times faster than a human, movement is a turkey hunter’s greatest enemy. And remember that camouflage does not make you invisible – even though camouflaged, you are still an unnatural form in the woods that birds will notice.

Do not attempt to stalk a turkey. Your chances of success are poor and, at best, you might get a glimpse of tail feathers. More importantly, that gobbler or hen you are stalking may turn out to be another hunter, a potentially dangerous situation. Many turkey hunters are very convincing callers, so assume that another person is making every sound you hear and always keep a safe distance. If another hunter is working a flock, give that person the same respect that you would expect and do not interfere by calling or spooking the birds.

Do not jump and turn at a turkey approaching from behind. The chance of getting a good shot is very slim. Instead be patient, remain still and let the bird pass.

Know the capabilities of your gun, crossbow, or bow and use it safely. Be positive of your target, make sure the bird is within range, and shoot at the neck and head only.

Need information?

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(*This is a field office)

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Direct DNR website URLs:

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